

## Bird Protection in Queensland.

THE following report is taken from the Brisbane *Daily Mail* of 2nd August:—

The Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Lennon) adopted a most sympathetic attitude to a deputation which waited upon him yesterday to plead the cause of Queensland's beautiful and useful birds. The deputation suggested that the old Acts (1877-84) were obsolete, and should be superseded by a measure embodying provisions more in keeping with modern views regarding the value of birds. They put forward a number of clauses as suggestions to be incorporated in the proposed new Act. These included provisions prohibiting the taking of eggs of protected birds, the penalizing of anyone knowingly having feathers (including Egret plumes) or any other portion of protected native game in possession, the prohibition of trapping during birds' breeding season, provision for the better treatment of cage birds and examination of bird dealers' shops, the bestowal of greater powers on honorary rangers, the prohibition of the use of firearms by boys under 16 years, and increases in the penalties under the Act from £1 to £3 (minimum) and £6 to £10 (maximum). In addition, it was suggested that a commission of ornithologists be appointed to advise the Minister in the administration of the Act, to issue printed matter for the enlightenment of the public, and generally to control the interests of birds in relation to agriculture in Queensland, the commission to be purely an honorary one, on lines adopted in certain parts of America.

The Minister, in reply, acknowledged the many complimentary references made to the valuable work he had already done in the matter of bird protection, and said he fully appreciated not only the value of most birds, but the charm they were to the countryside. He had, he said, been very interested in all the députation had had to say, and he quite agreed with most of the suggestions put forward. These were, however, largely anticipated in a Bill that was already "on the stocks"—a bill making for the protection of both birds and animals. For instance, there were clauses prohibiting the taking of eggs or having in possession the feathers of protected birds, regulations for the control of trapping, and provisions in respect of the power of rangers or guardians. In passing, Mr. Lennon remarked that he knew from personal observation how quickly birds came to recognize places where they were properly treated. On Dunk Island, for instance, where he had been several times, the birds were delightfully trustful and plentiful.

On 9th August Messrs. Henry Tryon (Government Entomologist) and A. H. Chisholm, R.A.O.U., were to have addressed, on behalf of the birds, the annual conference of the associated municipalities of Queensland. At the last moment Mr. Tryon was unable to attend and tell the conference something of his researches into the food of birds, and Mr. Chisholm addressed about

200 delegates, representing all parts of the State. He suggested (*vide Brisbane Courier*) that it would be fair for the conference, after having discussed those birds which came under the ban of bird-pest boards, to give a little kindly consideration to those natives which did valuable work, without reward, the whole year through. It was, he said, within the power of municipalities to help the work of the Agricultural Department by applying to have certain areas under their jurisdiction proclaimed as sanctuaries—cities of refuge where the birds might breed undisturbed by the thoughtless "pot-hunter." He asked delegates to suggest this humane and common-sense action to their respective councils; not to allow any bird to be proclaimed a pest until definite ornithological evidence had been obtained on the point; to help on the valuable work of the Education and Agricultural Departments in endeavouring to bring Queensland into line with other enlightened countries in the matter of bird protection; and generally to safeguard, by way of reciprocation, the interesting, valuable, and beautiful birds in all parts of the State. In reply to a question, the visitor stated that the English Starling (as distinct from the native Starling of North Queensland) was now plentiful in the southern parts of the State. He was not asking for protection for this bird, which, like the Sparrow, should never have been brought to this country; they both drove out more useful native birds and upset the natural balance.

On the following day a conference of delegates from the Bird Pest Boards of the Brisbane, Darling Downs, North Coast, Burnett, and Wide Bay Districts discussed, for the first time, the matter of assisting in the protection of valuable native birds. The executive was directed to report on the subject.

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### Proposed Refuge for Wild-Fowl.

LAWRENCE Jones and J. Lyle Bayliss, of Lexington, Kentucky, new owners of Jefferson Island, former home of Joe Jefferson, which he named "Bob Acres" after the character in "The Rivals," will turn their 10,000 acres into a sanctuary for birds and other wild life. They have petitioned M. L. Alexandria, Commissioner of Conservation, to set aside Lake Peigneur, which adjoins the property, as a wild water-fowl refuge. They own more than a third of the land circling the lake, and owners of other property have signified their desire that all shooting on the lake be prohibited. As soon as all necessary signatures are received these requests will be complied with, it is said, making the first of a series of interior refuges to be established by the Department of Conservation. It is proposed by the new owners of "Bob Acres" to spend several thousand dollars on the property to make it a bird haven. A dam will be constructed on the edge of the lake to re-establish a former cypress